



March 11, 2015

Ms. Kristine Hansen  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Sacramento District – Reno Office  
300 Booth Street Rm 3060  
Reno, NV 89509

Dear Ms. Hansen,

The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) grants 401 Water Quality Certification (NV401-13-035) to the Washoe County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) for Phase II of the Southeast Connector (SEC) Project in Washoe County, Nevada. The primary objective of the project is to construct a new 5.5 mile, six (6) lane arterial roadway on the eastside of the Truckee Meadows to alleviate projected future traffic congestion in the area. Phase I of the project, which did not require 404 authorization, included the link into the intersection of Greg Street and Sparks Boulevard and the bridge crossing over the Truckee River.

Phase II of the SEC will begin 800 feet south of Cleanwater Way extending south parallel to the west side of Steamboat Creek, through UNR Farms, Rosewood Lakes Golf Course, Butler Ranch, Huffaker Narrows and will tie into the intersection of South Meadows and Veterans Parkway. Roadway construction will permanently impact 11.45 acres and temporarily impact 16.58 acres of wetlands or Waters of the U.S. (WOUS). Hydraulic modeling, conducted by RTC, has demonstrated to the local jurisdictions that the raised roadway design, which includes 5 bridges, numerous large equalization culverts and excavated areas for volume mitigation, will allow conveyance and storage in the critical flood pool without causing a rise in the maximum water surface elevation of the 117 year flood event. This “no rise” condition, determined by the modeling, complies with City of Reno Ordinance 6164 and Washoe County Ordinance 110.416.57.

Mercury contamination caused by upstream historic mining activities will be addressed within project boundaries. However, the project will not eliminate mercury because upstream sources have not been remediated. Where appropriate, soils containing levels of mercury between 10 mg/kg (10 ppm) and 50 mg/kg (50 ppm) will be excavated and sequestered within the roadway prism to reduce the potential for exposure. Soil containing concentrations greater than 50 mg/kg will be sequestered under the roadway prism above the 117 year flood elevation. Excavated material will be controlled as prescribed in the Soil Management Plan (Appendix K, 404 Permit Application, July 2013) and the Sampling Analysis and Monitoring Plan (December 2014) submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and reviewed by NDEP Bureau of Corrective Actions (BCA).

The project design in the Butler Ranch area also includes topographic elements which are expected to minimize conditions that may promote mercury methylation. Approximately 85 acres of floodplain in the Butler Ranch area between Mira Loma and S. Meadows Parkway will be excavated for flood inundation and revegetated. This area will be graded with a positive slope so it will drain back towards the creek after high flow, reducing the potential for water to impound and result in the anaerobic conditions conducive to mercury methylation.

To compensate for the loss of existing WOUS, 21.8 acres of mitigation will be required for this project. The RTC will create approximately 60 acres of wetlands and open water between Pembroke Drive and Cleanwater Way. The new wetland complex will be fed by Yori Drain, which collects urban runoff from the City of Reno west of the project area. Based on historical water quality data the water in Yori Drain is not expected to be a significant source of mercury. Soil sampling conducted in this area by RTC at UNR Farms South in 2011 determined the mean concentrations of mercury are less than 1 mg/kg (Appendix E, 404 Permit Application, July 2013). The constructed wetland will have the potential to reduce other contaminants, such as bacteria and nitrogen, prior to discharge into

Steamboat Creek. Approximately 6800 feet of incised streambank between Pembroke and Cleanwater Way will also be stabilized above the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) utilizing rock and willow plantings.

## CONDITIONS

- Photographs which document conditions before, during and after construction should be submitted to the Bureau of Water Quality Planning (BWQP) on a quarterly basis and must include BMPs used to prevent erosion, control sediment and protect water quality. Photos taken at each stage of the project should be documented using the same locations, camera position, view angles and zoom.
- **Special attention must be paid to BMPs to prevent sediment from being discharged and transported downstream, particularly during construction of the Mira Loma Bridge and during any bank stabilization activities.**
- A plan for diverting flow, realigning the creek and for re-watering the new channels at Mira Loma Bridge, Alexander Lake Bridge and the South Butler Ranch Oxbow must be provided to BWQP prior to any construction activities in these segments of Steamboat Creek.
- If natural materials such as mulch or straw bales are selected as BMPs they should be certified as weed free.
- Any modifications to original project submittal must be reviewed and approved by this office prior to implementation.

All conditions of the Temporary Authorization to Discharge (Working in Waterways permit), the De-Watering Permit or other permits issued by NDEP for the project must be followed. Copies of any Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMR) submitted to the Bureau of Water Pollution Control should also be submitted to BWQP. A copy of the Final Report submitted to the Bureau of Water Pollution Control (BWPC) for the Temporary Discharge permit will satisfy BWQP's reporting requirement after project completion. Long term, *post construction* monitoring will be addressed by the ACOE under the conditions of the 404 permit.

This Section 401 Water Quality Certification is subject to the acquisition of all necessary local, regional, state and federal permits and approvals as required by law. Failure to meet any conditions of this Certification, any other permit required by NDEP for this project or any violation of NAC 445A may result in the revocation of this 401 Water Quality Certification.

If you have any questions, please contact me via [jstone@ndep.nv.gov](mailto:jstone@ndep.nv.gov) or at (775) 687-9456.

Sincerely yours,



Jeanmarie Stone  
Environmental Scientist III  
Bureau of Water Quality Planning

cc: Lee Gibson, RTC of Washoe County  
Garth Oksol, RTC of Washoe County  
Dave Gaskin, P.E., NDEP Deputy Administrator  
Kathy Sertic, NDEP-BWQP Chief  
Al Tinney, P.E., NDEP-BWPC Chief  
Cliff Lawson, P.E., NDEP-BWPC  
Jeff Collins, NDEP-BCA Chief